

FOUNDATIONS BOARD

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I AT MĀNOA FOUNDATIONS BOARD

April 29, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Linda Cox
Chair, UHM General Education Committee

FROM: Todd H. Sammons
Chair, UHM Foundations Board

SUBJECT: Academic Year 2004-2005 Report

Meetings: We met five times during the past academic year as a full board and once during the Christmas break as a “rump.” The meetings during Fall Semester 2004 were on September 7, September 22, October 6, and December 1; the “rump” meeting was on December 30; the only meeting during Spring Semester 2005 was March 10. We may be meeting at least one more time before Board members scatter for the summer break.

Courses Recommended for Approval:

Hawai‘i CC MATH 100 (Symbolic Reasoning designation)
UHM MATH 112 (Symbolic Reasoning designation)
Maui CC MATH 112 (Symbolic Reasoning designation)
Leeward CC ANTH 151 (Global & Multicultural Perspectives designation)

Courses Still in Process:

Maui CC MATH 110 (for a Symbolic Reasoning designation)
Maui CC MATH 203 (for a Symbolic Reasoning designation)

Course Whose Proposal Was Withdrawn by the Proposer:

UHM LING 103 (for a Symbolic Reasoning designation)

Other Decisions Made:

1. We decided to continue the tradition established by previous UHM Foundations Boards of discussing proposals via the following procedure: (a) taking a straw poll of Board members on each proposal seriatim (i.e., we do the straw poll one proposal at a time rather than taking a straw poll on all the proposals at once); (b) proceeding to discussion of a proposal only if least one Board member has concerns about a proposal (if no concerns, then move to an official vote); and (c) voting only after a thorough discussion of the proposal, if one is needed: see (b) above.

2. We decided to ask the UHM GEC for the ability to give a course a provisional designation. Rather, then, than deny slightly “iffy” courses a Foundations designation, we would

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let such a course be taught a couple of times in order for the proposer(s) to establish a track record, after which the proposer(s) would re-apply for the regular five-year designation. Our logic: collegiality + our feeling that right now we discriminate against new courses (it is easier for a course that has been taught to get a Foundations designation). The GEC turned down our request.

3. We recommended that the UHM GEC accept the program portfolios of Honolulu Community College and Kapi‘olani Community College. This was the mechanism established by the Multicampus Foundations Committee to vet each others’ programs, in a process analogous to that of the Systemwide Standing Committee on Written Communication, which vets writing-intensive programs across the system. (To date, the Multicampus Foundations Committee has only HCC, KCC, and UHM as members.) The vetting process will be done annually. The GEC agreed to our request.

4. We decided to work with the other two Foundations Boards (at HCC and KCC) to establish “Explanatory Notes” for each of the Foundations designations, such notes to be analogous to those currently in place for the Focus designations. Each campus would send appropriate members of its Foundations Board to participate in drafting the three sets of “Explanatory Notes.” These notes would not become official until each campus’s Foundations Board had accepted them. The Explanation of Hallmarks (draft June 2, 2003) would serve as the departure point for these “Explanatory Notes.” The idea is to establish a common interpretive tradition not only so that can Boards be comfortable with their decisions but also so that proposers will have a better idea of what the Board on their campus is looking for in a Foundations proposal.

5. We decided to set up “working groups” with the other two Foundations Boards for each of the three designations. When, then, any Board received a proposal, it would be circulated to the appropriate working group, who would discuss the proposal either by meeting in person or by using e-mail. Board members would inform their own Board of any working group discussion of a proposal. The working groups would not be voting to accept or reject a proposal: that remains the task of each campus’s Foundations Board. The idea is to widen the number of experts commenting on a proposal.

Other Matters Discussed:

1. The first set of five-year Foundations designations runs out in two academic years: i.e., at the beginning of academic year 2007-2008. Therefore, courses which gained a Foundations designation for academic year 2002-2003 will need to submit a renewal proposal during academic year 2006-2007. We have batted around the idea of urging departments to submit renewal proposals early: sometime during academic year 2005-2006. If successful, this would alleviate some of the burden on the 2007-2008 UHM Foundations Board of reviewing some three dozen renewal proposals. We do not know if this would require UHM GEC approval.

2. Now that we have three functioning Foundations Boards (HCC, KCC, UHM), maybe we need a common proposal form.

